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NOTES AND NEWS.

In the discussion of the Sugar Duty Bill in the Imperial Legislative Council at Calcutta, the Hon. Mr. P. M. Mehta, we are glad to observe, expressed the opinion we have already stated "that a certain amount of further investigation and verification was essential." Sir James Westland afterwards told the Council that "the figures laid before the Council were taken from the reports of high officers, and these reports were the results of careful enquiries," and he went on, somewhat superfluously, to say that the official correspondence would have been at the disposal of any member who wished to verify the facts. But, as we have shown, "the figures laid before the Council" were quite inadequate for their purpose. They were essentially indefinite. It is very well to say "120" and "60" and "a large number" of refineries, for example; but where is the good of the figures unless we know at the same time the extent of each of the refineries? The slight and recent decline in the area of cultivation, which Sir James Westland explicitly acknowledged, cut the ground effectually from under his argument about refineries. The figures were to the last degree perfunctory and unintelligent. Besides, it was plain from Sir Antony MacDonnell's report that the information from the North-West had been hastily and imperfectly gathered, and that Sir Antony himself was not prepared by any means to attribute the decline in cultivation to the inroads of bounty-fed sugar in competition.

But what Mr. Mehta had in view, apparently, was less the figures than the causes at work. "It is true," he said, "a certain number of sugar refineries in the country have been stopped, but I am not sure that the importation of bounty-fed sugar into the country is the cause of this." To Mr. Mehta's real argument Sir James Westland made no reply. He goes on the assumption that the importation of bounty-fed sugar is the true cause, without offering any proof. The efficiency of Mr. Mehta's complaint is strengthened materially by the very report of Sir Antony MacDonnell to which Sir James Westland appeals with such confidence. At the same time Mr. Mehta indicated his doubts of the figures; he admits "a certain number" of refineries closed, but evidently is dissatisfied with the figures, as he had every reason to be. The Hon. Mr. Chitnavis, himself an agriculturist, failed to give any greater definiteness to the figures, although he stated from his personal experience that "the existing state of things with regard to the sugar industry of India is such that it is impossible to tolerate it any longer." If the facts be so, surely the figures are producible, and ought to be produced, and cause and effect ought to be demonstrated clearly. "It is said," Mr. Chitnavis stated, "the rayats in Bengal have ceased to grow date trees." But why leave the matter on vague hearsay? This is no sort of rational basis for legislation, especially for legislation upsetting established principles.

Another objection raised by Mr. Mehta was "that the matter was not so urgent as not to allow time for the appointment of a Select Committee." Of course Sir James Westland was ready with the formal distinction between the functions of the Council and the functions of a Select Committee. But the point was purely technical. An examination of the Bill in a Select Committee would not have been without its effects upon the strict functions of the Council. A Committee with any backbone in it would have turned the thing inside out and exhibited the absurdity of it. On the point of urgency Sir James naturally availed himself of the weapons placed in his hands by the Hon. Mr. Chitnavis and the Hon. Mr. Charlu. Yet it is certain that a man of his acumen would have had something very different to say about the speeches of these gentlemen if it had so happened that they did not jump with the purposes of the Government. Sir James said the Bill was not referred because "when the principle was adopted there was little work for a Select Committee to do." Still, they might have been allowed the opportunity of doing that little, with the possible consequences. It is far from improbable, however, that Sir James refrained from giving the really operative reasons.

The Hon. Mr. Chitnavis, having expressed his "cordial concurrence" in the Government proposals, might have been expected to set forth stronger reasons than he did. We are not impressed by general assertions where particular facts are so urgently wanted. Nor are predictions any more convincing apart from a specific basis. "Free trade," said Mr. Chitnavis, "can never prevent us from initiating measures of self-defence." Of course not. Neither can it prevent people from adopting as measures of self-defence measures of exploded economic fallacy. Nor is the Hon. Mr. Ananda Charlu to be followed in his picture of possible disasters. No doubt the foreign raiders would eventually try to "dictate their own terms," but that would hardly, we take it, be the end of the chapter—unless Indian enterprise be strangely exhausted. And why, in this particular case, speak of the consumer's duty of "acting for and being acted upon by the common good of his community"? If he buy his sugar dear, that is not for the common good of the community, but for the good of the particular classes of cultivators and refiners, and they are but very small classes. Mr. Charlu thinks this legislation will "prove a powerful solvent of doubts entertained about the operation of free trade doctrines," and looks forward hopefully to similar applications in the immediate future. We fear the solution of these extraordinary doubts will prove an expensive process to his fellow-countrymen.

When Lord Curzon claimed "complete unanimity" in the Council, he hardly did justice to the dissenting criticisms of Mr. Mehta. "I have always heard it made a reproach against the Indian Government," he said, "that it is perpetually conducting enquiries, and very seldom acting upon them; and that reproach I, at any rate, during my term of administration here, desire to escape." Well, the only rational way of effecting such escape is, not to refrain from enquiries, but to act upon the results of them. What is the use of telling people that "we have been conducting enquiries for a whole year past" when the results are not set forth adequately and convincingly in the debate on the subject in Council? "We regarded the case as urgent": yes, but what were the definite grounds of the urgency? Lord Curzon seems to run the risk of a still worse reproach than the one he desires to escape. Neither is it correct to say that there is "almost equally complete unanimity outside," or that the dissents from Bombay and Karachi are merely the opinions of "the importing merchants," or worthy of no particular consideration. Lord Curzon is entitled to claim that "few measures have ever passed through this Council with a greater weight of opinion behind them." But when he speaks of such opinion as "qualified," we emphatically dissent; and when he calls it "homogeneous" we confess we do not enter into his meaning.

Lord Curzon affirms "that it is in the interests of India, and of India alone, that this legislation has been

proposed." Then Lord Curzon, in our decided opinion, does not understand the interests of India. "It may be," he says, "that our Bill may ultimately affect the action of other countries . . . . will set an example of far-reaching significance." Just so. It is not for nothing that he has the House at Westminster in his mind's eye, and on his tongue. We must take Lord Curzon's word for it that the Council have looked solely to the interests of India, but we cannot help discerning the undisguised relation between this Bill and the forces hostile to Free Trade at home. The necessary inference is so strong that it needs all our confidence in Lord Curzon's explicit declaration to counterbalance it. Only we are very sure that no Protectionist nonsense will be submitted to here: "the mutterings of the high priests at Free Trade shrines" will be respected in this country. "This is not a question of economic orthodoxy or heterodoxy," he says —and he is actually Viceroy of India! If Lord George Hamilton knew his business, he would at once despatch to him a Primer of Economics. Such economic heresy as he preached to his Council would not be easy to parallel. "Stimulate and encourage the development" of this indigenous industry—certainly. Coddle it at the expense of the consumer—certainly not.

The *Champion* has very properly pointed out that during the past eight years the acreage under sugar cane has fluctuated from year to year, absolutely apart from this scare of competitive sugar. The chief factor in the cause is the behaviour of the monsoon; in 1897-98 one would like to know how much the severe famine had to do with it. These are points that would have been examined by a prudent Government anxious above all things for the interests of India. In any case it is not every industry that the Government rushes to assist the moment the first cold blast of adversity strikes it. "Such pleas on which to base fiscal legislation," says the *Champion*, "would raise a smile to the lips of practical business men and hard-headed scientific economists in the House of Commons, and cover with ridicule the Minister proposing legislation on meagre and insufficient data which will not for a moment bear a close examination." The *Champion*, we think, is right—that is if the legislation were proposed for any place except India. It will do the Viceroy and his Finance Minister good even yet to study the figures set forth by our contemporary on the authority of official reports, and to compare them with the figures adduced in Council; and the argument built on the statistics will also be usefully suggestive. "Was ever such a Philistine fiscal policy adopted in any other country?" We should fancy not. And we suspect there is something substantial under the *Champion's* phrase, "the organised hypocrisy of the whole game."

In an article contributed to the *Manchester Guardian* of Friday last an Anglo-Indian correspondent brought out some important points:

> It must be frankly admitted that the interests of the sugar-cane growers are of great importance, but they are, after all, only a small portion of the population. Sir J. Westland mentioned in his speech that of the 3,000,000 acres under sugar, 2,300,000 acres were in two provinces, so that these would have their industry protected at the cost of the rest of India. Cane, too, is essentially a crop of the richer and more fertile and better-irrigated lands. The inhabitants of the less favoured tracts will pay as consumers for a tax which keeps up the price of sugar without gaining as producers; and, finally, the poorest classes of all, those underfed masses who are politically unimportant and have no one to voice their interests against a proposed measure of the Government, will not be able to buy quite as much as they might have done of what is practically their only luxury. This week's *Sketch* reports some recent experiments made in the German army which prove the great value of sugar as an article of diet, more particularly to men of inferior physical development. The poorest classes in India are already especially injured by the tax on salt, of which they require as much as other and richer men, and it would need much more cogent evidence than any yet produced to justify a measure which may injuriously affect them as sugar consumers.

The only reasonable standpoint from which to regard the Sugar Duty Act is that of the mass of the Indian people, and those who so regard it cannot but condemn it as a measure at once injurious in itself and an opportune pretext for further measures of the same injurious tendency.

The full text of Sir James Westland's Financial Statement has now reached England, and we can therefore examine one or two points in rather more detail than was possible a few weeks ago. This fuller information however does not in the least invalidate any of the criticisms we then urged against the latest offspring of Sir James Westland's finance. The exact figures entirely bear out our contention that the rise in Exchange has removed the last pretext for maintaining the heavy additional taxation imposed in recent years expressly to meet the fall in the gold value of the rupee. But these detailed figures justify us in another remarkable way. With only the total amount of the estimated revenue and expenditure in 1899-1900 and the amount of the surplus telegraphed in the summaries received here before us we felt convinced that Sir James Westland had in the attempt to avoid a reduction of taxation—a weakening of the financial position, he called it—seriously under-estimated the revenue for the current year. In this suspicion we are now confirmed. The Indian Finance Minister has estimated the revenue for 1899-1900 in an extraordinary way. Under almost every head he has taken a pessimist's view of the financial outlook. Only in two items does he Budget for an increase, namely in opium and in railways. The net result is the trifling increase of Rx.132,000 which so astonished the public when it was first made known.

Even this Rx. 132,000 is a delusion. For over against it must be set an estimated increase of no less than Rx. 668,000 in the cost of collection. So that Sir James Westland has in a time of expanding revenue actually estimated that he will receive *net* about half-a-million less this year than last year. With regard to the expenditure there is nothing novel in an estimated increase under almost every head. In fact these increases amount in the aggregate to nearly two crores of rupees and are only half met by the saving effected (about one crore) through the absence of provision made for warlike operations. This of course does not mean that there will be no warlike operations this year. With a talkative and ultimatum-giving Viceroy like Lord Curzon, and with the Indian Government's propensity to make military promenades along the frontier, any confident hopes of that kind would be rash. Still, on the strength of these hopes, the net estimated increase of expenditure in India figures out at about Rx. 900,000. There remained then the expenditure in England and Exchange. By taking a lower rate than that obtained during the year just passed, and with the help of the customary increase in the sterling charges, this portion of the Budget was made to yield Rx. 750,000 against the accounts. Then with a final juggle over "Provincial adjustment" by which he made a difference to Imperial Expenditure in two years of Rx. 2,342,000, Sir James Westland manages to keep down the surplus for 1899-1900 to just under four crores. All this to avoid the necessity for reducing taxation, in order to have money in hand with which to play at currency reform!

Upon this same question of under-estimating the revenue and over-estimating the expenditure Mr. D. E. Wacha has contributed some very forcible criticisms to the Bombay *Champion*. We have been favoured with an advance proof of his article, in which he adduces some very telling figures. He sets out side by side the Budget Estimate of Revenue and the closed accounts for each year during Sir James Westland's tenure of the office of Indian Chancellor of the Exchequer. In every one of the last five years, except 1896-7 (the year of famine), these figures show that the actual revenue received very largely exceeded the estimate made. Of course it is good to be cautious; but when that caution, founded on habit, goes to the length of standing in the way of a legitimate demand for reduction of taxation, it ceases to be good. In contemplating these accounts it is impossible to get away from these two important points: (1) Exchange has ceased to provide the justification for maintaining any longer recent additions made to taxation solely on account of Exchange; (2) the financial position of the Indian Treasury has been deliberately written down in order to cancel as far as possible the strength of the case for a remission of taxation. To ignore the first consideration involves, as we have already pointed out, a practical breaking faith with the Indian people: to act upon the second is to be guilty of a piece of dishonest finance. In their adversity the Indian Government did not show to advantage in the methods they adopted to meet it; in their prosperity they show to still smaller advantage in

their attempts to keep that prosperity to themselves (for currency experiments) and thereby to deprive the people of any alleviation of their many heavy burdens.

When Mr. J. E. O'Conor was recalled by the Currency Committee to rebut some very awkward evidence given by preceding witnesses, one thing he dealt with was the allegation that the closing of the mints had caused dissatisfaction in India. "Neither from the Native Press nor from other sources," he said, "has there been any indication of dissatisfaction with the action of Government in closing the mints." He actually read the resolution moved by Mr. Wacha at the National Congress in December last, and found nothing there to qualify his statement. He also read the resolutions on currency matters at the Congress in 1892, and again in 1893. And, said he: "if there had been any dissatisfaction, we should not have been left to hear of it more than five years after the closure of the mints from a resolution passed by the National Congress." A more insolent and impudent statement could hardly have been concocted even within the prolific circle of officialism. The resolution of December 1892 pleaded for further information and consideration before closure of the mints; the resolution of 1893 recorded the "deep regret" of the Congress after closure, and gave the reasons. What more was to be done? The mints were closed, and no overt complaints were of any practical use. Besides, the Congress occupies itself with the really essential side of the mischief: it continuously insists upon the true reform necessary—namely, to reduce the payments in gold in London, which have all the exhausting effects of a tribute.

The ways of some of our heaven-born bureaucrats in India are peculiar. The Bombay Government, having offered a reward of 20,000 rupees for information which would lead to the discovery of the murderers of Lieutenant Ayerst and Mr. Rand, found reasons for reducing by one-half the sum paid to the informers—the brothers Dravid. But that was not all. From this reduced amount the Government further deducted 250 rupees as income-tax! This has proved too much even for the faithful *Pioneer*, which says (March 24) that the transaction "admits of no defence" and "is a breach of faith pure and simple." Nay, our contemporary declares that the Bombay Government "does not appear to possess the sense of shame."

> Lord Sandhurst and his accountant-general in private life no doubt would be found to have the most edifying ideas as to the transaction between Clive and Omichund; but the difference between them in public conduct would merely seem to be that whereas Clive broke his word under strong inducements and with a big object, they have tampered with the good name of the British *raj* for a sum that a poor clerk would hardly consider a temptation.

The justice of these scathing remarks is not to be denied. But we fear that, as they are likely to bring the Government into contempt, the official *Pioneer* may be prosecuted under the new law of sedition.

The full accounts of the last meeting in Calcutta to protest against the Municipal Bill emphasise the impression communicated by the telegraphic reports. "Two to three thousand," says the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, "had to go away for want of standing place. Even respectable ratepayers were seen to stand all the time the meeting lasted, so great was the enthusiasm evoked." The real points in the substantial case are touched effectively by the *Pioneer*, whose opinion is certainly not biassed in favour of the popular view. The *Pioneer* says:—

> The point that we would wish to bring home to the unsparing critics of municipal government is, that its present feebleness is largely due to official action or pressure. We will not go so far as to say that the pressure cannot be justified, but the fact remains that municipal government as such has been severely handicapped. You cannot drive a straight furrow if you yoke the horse and the buffalo to one plough. Official control is no doubt absolutely necessary at present, but it is, if largely exercised, itself an evil.

This is a worthy declaration of the *Pioneer*. It may be too strong to say that official control is "absolutely necessary;" but the rest of the criticism is eminently independent and to the point. If the fair-mindedness of the *Pioneer* had characterised the Bengal Government, this preposterous Municipal Bill would never have been heard of. The *Pioneer* sees the importance of Native co-operation; the Government unfortunately is afraid of such co-operation, entertaining the futile notion that the government of the city of Calcutta can be carried on by a purely external power.

Mr. A. M. Bose, the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* announces, has decided to stand for the Bengal Legislative Council in the Dacca division. The Mahárájá Surjakanta Acharjee Bahadur, who had proposed to be a candidate, has generously given way to Mr. Bose. The services already rendered by Mr. Bose have been so conspicuous that his return to the Council will be welcomed cordially throughout the Province.

The plague is still rife in Bombay, the daily mortality being 350, more or less. The third year of the epidemic surpasses the previous two both in virulence and in duration. Yet people are calmly going about their business as if Bombay were the healthiest seaside resort in the world. What has come over the "stringent measures" for stamping out the plague? Dr. Blaney does not believe in them. Writing to the *Times of India* he says:—

> Up to the present time all our anti-plague measures have gone for nothing. These measures do not diminish and cannot abolish a plague. Our hope and security lies in the certainty that the invasion has considerably spent itself. . . . . I am myself so firm a believer in the natural duration period of plague invasions that I do not care to seek for the hidden evidence as to the probabilities or possibilities of the formation of "permanent infective centres" in large cities. Bombay is certainly not a city adapted to permanent plague.

No doubt the public are facing the visitation, if not with courage, at any rate with the indifference of fatalism. And it may be that "such a splendid and prosperous city cannot be shelved and blotted out of existence by wholesale desertion of the population on the *ipse dixit* opinion of the best-meaning epidemiological savants of this microbic age." Yet surely medical and sanitary science are not to confess themselves baffled. There must be some cause of the plague that is capable of discovery and removal.

We record with much regret the death of Sir Monier Monier-Williams, K.C.I.E., Boden Professor of Sankrit in the University of Oxford. He was born at Bombay in 1819. Intended for an Indian career, he studied at Haileybury, and passed first of his year, but the whole current of his life was diverted by the death of his twin-brother in a border skirmish, which so painfully affected his mother that he abandoned his Indian prospects. Having gained the Boden Sanskrit scholarship at Oxford, he was appointed Professor of Sanskrit, Bengali, and Telugu at Haileybury; and he was last survivor of the Haileybury Professorate. In 1860 he became Boden Professor of Sanskrit at Oxford. It was mainly through his efforts that the Indian Institute at Oxford was established; and a few years back he presented all his Oriental manuscripts and books to its Oriental museum and valuable Oriental library. Three times he visited India—in 1875, 1876-77, and 1883-84. He was knighted in 1886, and made K.C.I.E. in 1897; and he was D.C.L. of Oxford, LL.D. of Calcutta, and member of the most important Oriental societies of Europe and India. His numerous works on Indian literature, social life, and religion—technical and interpretative—are well known and highly esteemed. His chief literary work, the Sanskrit-English Dictionary cost him twenty laborious years; and the second edition, twice the extent of the first, was finally passed for press only within ten days of his lamented death. The loss of two such scholars as Dr. G. W. Leitner and Sir Monier Monier-Williams within a month of each other is a severe blow to Eastern scholarship in England.

Sir Antony MacDonnell managed to put some healthy and breezy views into his address to the Convocation of Allahabad University. Those that run down the Babu and Indian education had better ponder this:—

> A vast improvement has been effected in the purity and efficiency of our administration by the introduction into it of the men whom our schools and colleges have turned out. Every employer of labour will tell you the same thing so far as his business is concerned. The Education Commission said "that throughout the country civil officers have begun to discover and readily to acknowledge that in integrity, capacity for work, intelligence, industry, the subordinate trained in college excels his fellow brought up in according to the traditions of the past. At the Bar the students of our colleges acquit themselves with distinguished success, and their influence has been generally of a healthy kind. Where command of capital opens to them a commercial career, the general testimony is of the same purport as that borne to the credit with which they fill other positions in life." That was the opinion of the Education Commission fifteen years ago; in my judgment, and I speak from experience of administrative control in four out of the eight great Provinces of the Empire, it is truer now than it was then.

AN "INCONGRUOUS PHENOMENON."

FOR a Viceroy who vowed that he would not be talkative, Lord Curzon appears to make many speeches. "It seems to be thought in some quarters," he remarked to his old constituents at Southport last November, "that, as I have been compelled by my recent duties to be a talking member of the House of Commons, therefore I am going to develop into that most incongruous of all phenomena a talking Viceroy." He went on to give Southport and the world what he called "a most consolatory assurance" that he would do nothing of the kind. But how has he kept his word? He had not been many weeks in India when the *Times* printed a long article entitled, with unconscious humour, "Lord Curzon's First Speeches." For our part we would not gag Lord Curzon, though his style is too "full-bodied" to be refreshing. But he ought not to find silence tedious when he has nothing of importance to say. In a rather protracted series of farewell speeches he promised, among other things, to look into Indian questions carefully for himself. It was a commendable pledge. But he does not fulfil it when he hurriedly takes up one large question after another, only to dismiss them in flowing perorations. In his reply to an address from the people of Lyallpur a few days ago he indicated with sufficient clearness the purpose which he imagines that these short speeches on great subjects are serving. "It may," he said, "interest many of my fellow-countrymen in England, under whose eyes these words may subsequently fall, to know that," etc., etc. In fact Lord Curzon is taking the readers of English newspapers on a personally conducted tour through Anglo-Indian politics. He is prepared at the shortest notice to discourse upon any subject, with the British public standing by in large or small parties. In this enterprise he is aided and encouraged by the editor of the *Times*, who has obviously instructed his reporters throughout India to telegraph Lord Curzon's purple patches, regardless of expense. The *Observer* noticed the fact last Sunday, adding agreeably enough, "the only extraordinary part of the business is how it comes to pass that an Indian Viceroy's utterances have seldom been thought worth reporting before." The reflection may cause pain to those meritorious men, Lord Curzon's predecessors. But they may perchance console themselves with the thought that, in the words of the youthful prodigy himself, "a talking Viceroy" is the "most incongruous of all phenomena."

Well, Lord Curzon's words of wisdom on "the Simla exodus" have fallen—and it is of course a long descent—under the eyes of some of his fellow-countrymen. One would have thought that "the Simla exodus" was one of the large class of subjects upon which it is easy and even helpful not to make speeches. But Lord Curzon has willed otherwise, and the *Times* in a leading article welcomes his speech as a conclusive though perhaps superfluous answer to "the rhetoricians of the 'National Congress.'" One would naturally infer from this that the migration of the Government of India to the hills of the Punjab for the greater part of the year was a practice against which the Indian National Congress had frequently and bitterly inveighed. But that, as everybody who knows anything about the Congress is aware, is not by any means the case. What the Congress, in common with all the more thoughtful Englishmen in India, has done is to show how far the practice of the Government in this matter departs from economy and wise administration. It may well be, as Lord Curzon says, that a Viceroy cannot do justice to his work if he remains without intermission during the summer months in the low-lying delta of Bengal. But between that plan, which nobody has advocated, and the present custom of shifting all the chief machinery of Government to Simla for seven, eight or nine months in the year there is a great gulf. Criticism in India, so far as we are able to recall it (for the matter has, for a reason which will be seen in a moment, excited less interest of late) was directed to three main points, all of which are merely ignored both by Lord Curzon and by the *Times*. There was (1) the question of expense. This expense was of two kinds, being incurred partly in construction of offices and other buildings at Simla, partly in the annual cost of the transfer. As regards this latter expense an interesting Parliamentary Return was granted in August, 1886, on the motion of Sir John Gorst, showing "the annual dates, since the transfer of the Government of India to the Crown in 1858, of the migration of the Government of India at Calcutta to Simla, and the dates of its return to Calcutta, and, so far as possible, the extra annual cost upon the taxpayers of India in consequence of this annual migration of Government." From this Return, supplemented by a statement made by Sir Henry Fowler in the House of Commons on May 6, 1895, it appears that the annual expense of migration was (and presumably is) between Rx. 60,000 and Rx. 73,000, and that the capital expenditure upon Government buildings and offices at Simla had been about Rx. 800,000. Now, before this large capital sum had been spent, and when there was some hope of preventing the expenditure, "the Simla exodus" was undoubtedly subjected to severe criticism. Admitting readily that what was necessary to the health and the efficiency of highly-placed officers ought to be done, Indian and Anglo-Indian observers nevertheless demurred to expenditure which was notoriously extravagant. They asked three questions—whether a capital at once healthier and more suitable in other ways than Calcutta might not be found; whether, even though Calcutta remained the capital, there was not a nearer and therefore less costly hill-station than Simla; and whether, even though Simla were chosen, the expenditure might not be less wantonly profuse. We need not re-open these questions now; the point is that after the money had been spent—on the costly water-works, for instance, and on the road for Lady Lytton's pony carriage—the critics had to accept the accomplished fact. The expense is now mainly the annual expense of migration, and though this is much greater than is shown, and much greater than it ought to be, the argument on the score of expense has undoubtedly been weakened by the *chose jugée*. Nothing, however, could be more unfair to the advocates of economy than to imply that, at the time when their arguments were employed, they did not refer to substantial and practical issues. But what has an "incongruous phenomenon" to do with fairness?

The annual expense of Rx. 60,000 to Rx. 80,000 (together with what is hidden from the outside observer) is not perhaps a matter of first-rate importance. But—and this brings us to (2) a further point of criticism—it has to be remembered that all this and much other expenditure designed to render the daily life of officials more comfortable has not been allowed to interfere with rates of payment fixed on a scale far higher than the rates for similar work at home, and that because they were fixed by reference to the strain and inconvenience of contemporary Anglo-Indian life. A more scrupulous apportionment would not have imposed all the cost of "the Simla exodus" upon the taxpayers. If it be retorted that it is the taxpayers who obtain the best fruits of the migration, namely an increase in the efficiency of Government, we say that it is precisely (3) because of the obstacles which "the Simla exodus" places in the way of efficient government that its critics have always condemned it. "No one," said Lord Curzon in the speech at Southport to which reference has already been made, "no one recognises more clearly than I do that the first duty of a Viceroy is not speech, but administration, or that the best test of success is not eloquence but efficiency." Well, he has given us the speeches, and he has gone to Simla to prepare for the work of administration. "It is in order that the Viceroy may have time to enquire exhaustively into many questions calling for solution, time to mature his policy and programme for the forthcoming year, that he comes to Simla to find here that larger leisure which is denied to him either in Calcutta or on tour, and an atmosphere which is more conducive than that of the plains both to mental and physical energy. Simla is, in fact, the workshop in which during the summer months are fashioned the materials of each Viceroy's Indian administration, be it well constructed or badly constructed." But obviously the point of importance is whether Simla is a good workshop. Lord Curzon's testimonial to its excellence would be more valuable if it followed instead of preceding his trial of it. Observers of experience do not share Lord Curzon's optimism. Take, for example, the statements of two Anglo-Indian critics. Here is what Mr. F. H. Skrine, a member of the Indian Civil Service, wrote in June, 1897:—

> What shall I say of the annual migration to Simla, which has been imitated by provincial Governments of all degrees? It is an abuse which has been endured only because it has grown imperceptibly,

and so many are interested in maintaining it. That it should have sucked the life-blood of the administration for thirty years will not be credited by our successors a generation hence. If only for the sake of public morality, toleration should no longer be extended to the almost universal craving to avoid the inconveniences of a residence in the plains. What a spectacle does this blunted sense of public duty on the part of scores of high officials afford to the people of India! Few who have not repeatedly visited Simla, as I have done, are aware of the extent of the evil.

Here again is a passage from a trenchant article which appeared in 1894 in the columns of the accredited champion of the Indian Civil Service, the Calcutta *Englishman*:—

The Government at these times is very much like Harmeston's circus on tour, with the important distinction that it is longer on its travels and slower in getting to work on its new "pitch". . . . . We view the question of expense and even that of the dislocation of the offices four times a year as matters of almost no importance when compared with the influence which the system is bound to exert upon the policy of the Government and in moulding the opinions of those who control the Administration. . . . . The inevitable consequence of the prolonged removal of our rulers from the country and the people is the devotion of undue attention to "the fringes and outskirts" of the Imperial problem and the neglect of the internal condition of the country.

An admirable workshop—such is Lord Curzon's (prophetic) description of Simla. But how if those for whom the work is designed are absent and forgotten, and essential materials are not to be obtained? The Simla system, in the judgment of the *Englishman*, is "only another name for government by means of office files and despatches." At a time when thoughtful men are coming more and more to see that the aloofness of rulers from ruled is one of the gravest dangers in India to-day, when they deplore the prolonged removal not only of the Supreme Government but also of the provincial Governments from the country and the people, it remained for Lord Curzon to erect this aloofness into a canon of informed and vigorous administration. He has one excuse, but it is a bad one. Among other complaints against Calcutta he mentions that there the Viceroy "has barely time to get through the work of each day as it comes round, and never has time to think." This speech on "the Simla exodus," like so many other speeches of Lord Curzon's, must have been prepared at Calcutta. But we know now that he prepared them without having time to think. An "incongruous phenomenon" indeed! And what a warning for "the rhetoricians of the 'National Congress'."

THE CURRENCY COMMITTEE AGAIN.

It was on September 2 last (India, Vol. X, pp. 129-131) that we dealt with the first part of the evidence laid before Sir Henry Fowler's Committee on Indian Currency. Now we have before us the second part—some 260 further pages of not deliriously exciting Blue-book. Notwithstanding the Government tactics of placing the official and other Anglo-Indian witnesses well in front it was plain from the first batch of evidence that the bottom was knocked out of the proposals of the Government of India. In this second batch the wreckage of the Calcutta case is merely pulverised. Sir Robert Giffen gives extremely weighty evidence against the vexatious proposals; so does Lord Aldenham, leaving bimetallism aside for the nonce; and several representative business men—such as Mr. W. H. Cheetham of Messrs. Kilburn and Co., Calcutta, Mr. Donald Graham, C.I.E., Mr. David Cruickshank, chairman of the Indigo Association, Mr. Henry Bois, M.L.C., and ex-chairman of the Chamber of Commerce of Ceylon, Mr. Robert Barclay, President of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Walter Duncan, of Glasgow and Calcutta, and Mr. John Matheson Macdonald, of Messrs. Matheson and Co.—all these batter the Government projects into foolishness. Lord Northbrook takes the first place in this volume; but he advances very little beyond the notions that we dealt with somewhat tenderly on a former occasion (India, Vol. X, p. 314). Still, though in favour of a gold standard for India he does not agree with the particular method proposed by the Government of India for establishing it; he "does not understand a gold standard separated from a gold currency." Lord Farrer, unfortunately, does not amend his ways in his evidence. Professor Marshall restricts himself to principles; Mr. H. D. Macleod we have already disapproved of, theories and all; and Major Leonard Darwin need not be taken seriously, scheme or opinion. Mr. L. H. Courtney, M.P., advises the Government to take no further steps except to open the mints to the coinage of gold. Sir Alexander Mackenzie and Mr. J. E. O'Conor represent officialdom. But officialdom is completely outclassed.

There are two witnesses whom we have not yet mentioned whose presence will be particularly satisfactory as well as interesting to India. These are Mr. Merwanjee Rustomjee and Mr. Romesh Dutt, C.I.E. Mr. Merwanjee represented the Bombay Native Shares, Stock, and Exchange Association. For real grip of the subject from his own point of view, he compares most favourably with the best of the witnesses. "My view," he says, "is that Government should open to free coinage either of silver or of gold. I say gold for preference, because, now that the country has suffered so much from the closing of the mints, it is better to go on towards an effective gold currency, if possible"—at a ratio of 1s. 2d., with an Imperial guarantee—"convertibility of rupees not to be guaranteed until Government has collected sufficient gold." Failing that, open the mints to silver, meeting any loss "by a saving in expenditure, or by fresh taxation, or both," such points to be considered in detail by "a mixed committee of Englishmen and Natives combined." Mr. Romesh Dutt looks at the question in a broader light, and from points of view that open deeper vistas into the national life. He shows how the proposals of the Government would lead to a general increase of taxation; to enhanced demands of revenue; to "an addition to the profits of the prosperous classes who feed on the distresses of the poor, to the weight of the millstone which the poor and indebted classes carry round their necks;" to the virtual confiscation of about a third of the poor man's savings, put away in ornaments; to an enlargement of "the indebtedness of the people in India to the money-lenders of England;" to "a general increase in the pay and perquisites of all officials who are paid in rupees;" to a perpetuation of the artificial dislocation of trade and injury to manufacture already gravely initiated by the raising of the rupee; not to mention other points. Mr. Dutt also stoutly maintained the thoroughly correct view that the really necessary railways have already been made as well as some unnecessary ones; "we should not abandon the railway system altogether, but we should be cautious, and I think the representatives of the people should be consulted before any new lines are sanctioned." We are very grateful to Sir John Muir for emphasising the importance, not only of Mr. Dutt's evidence, but of the Committee's obtaining further evidence "from intelligent natives of India, men whose evidence would be of value to us and who stand well in their respective communities." Mr. Dutt made suggestions, and we hope now that some representative men will be invited. Mr. Dutt, with adroit boldness, got in this very true and very essential statement: "the difficulty in deciding Indian questions is not that you have not able men here, but you never see two sides of the question; you always see the official side of the question, and never the other."

One element of the question which is rather apt to be lost sight of in the arguments of economists, financiers and merchants was very firmly kept in view, not only by Mr. Romesh Dutt but also by Sir Robert Giffen. "What ought to be looked at," said Sir Robert, "is the interest of the people of India taken as a whole." Sir Henry Fowler had put to him a letter from West of Scotland manufacturers. "But I do not think," replied Sir Robert, "that the statements made in that memorial would justify one in saying that for India, *the people of India*, the silver standard was not the best. These are gentlemen writing from the point of view of their own interests as traders, and that is by no means conclusive of the matter." Just so; it is so important and yet so difficult to apprehend every item of evidence in all the circumstances and conditions under which it is uttered. Sir Robert Giffen goes right in the teeth of the Government proposals. He "regrets that those who have been putting forward the idea of having a gold currency have not supplied information as to the amount to which it could rise." He urges that the fact of India's being "a poor and indebted country" makes it "difficult to maintain a gold standard," even if it were set going. He entirely rejects "the leading idea at the root of the suggestion" of the Government scheme, "that a given value of money or currency is required by a community with a certain range of prices, and that if prices rise or fall the currency is proportionately increased or diminished, and *vice versa*," and "that one

form of money in value may be made to replace another exactly, so that if you make a gap in the one the other comes in." The unsoundness in this idea, he explains, is "that you may in fact have great changes in prices, with no change in the quantity of currency, and great changes in the quantity of currency without changes in prices;" and he cites the cases of Russia and the United States. He denies altogether the redundancy that the Government of India assume, and points out that the question, abstract as it may look, strikes at the root of their scheme. He will have nothing to say to any sort of "managed" currency. Then what is to be done? "On the whole," says Sir Robert Giffen, "the least disadvantageous course to follow would now be to go back to silver, in spite of all its deficiencies." "And risk depreciation?" asked the chairman. "Risk a great deal," replied Sir Robert. "The important thing is this, that to have a good money at all you ought to have an automatic standard." Pressed to the extreme length, Sir Robert, while maintaining that "silver would be the better standard," made this admission: "If you make the rupee quite convertible, and if you are prepared to face the expense, and if that should prove to be a kind of monetary arrangement which the people would willingly accept, then I have no objection to a gold standard for India in that way." But the "ifs" decisively bar the way. It should also be noted how Sir Robert argued against the necessity for the departure in 1893, and how stiffly he insisted against Sir David Barbour, that the Government of India in 1893 suggested "very little idea of going over to a gold standard at all," and no notion of "what length of time the operation would take." Sir Robert Giffen's evidence is far and away the most thoroughgoing examination of the whole case, and it completely pulverises the Government scheme at every point.

In all essentials the vast weight of evidence adduced by the other witnesses supports the evidence of Sir Robert Giffen. A very large portion of it deals with the propriety of the closure of the mints and with the effects thence resulting. The result of monetary stringency is now proved up to the hilt. Nearly everybody regards a gold standard as desirable, more or less; but nearly everybody concludes that it is impracticable on present or readily realisable conditions. A door is opened by several witnesses for a compromise with the Indian Government by taking the rupee at 1s. 2d. instead of 1s. 4d., which would lessen the practical difficulties in the way of the establishment of a gold standard. But after all there then recurs the difficulty of maintenance; and nobody who knows India will say that a gold currency is suitable to the country. We are thus thrown back on the essential point that the whole scheme is not proposed in the interests of the people, but is engineered solely to extricate the Government from its difficulties in meeting its gold debts in London. Mr. Dutt and some others pressed the reduction of expenditure and various other means of relief; but these are just the points on which the Government of India refuses to give way. They will take any route but the obviously right one. Anyhow, the present volume of evidence will place very serious obstacles in the way of the Committee's coming to a conclusion satisfactory to the Government of India.

OUR LONDON LETTER.

(FROM A PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.)

I LITTLE thought when I last wrote in this column that I should in the next letter have to announce the death of my old friend Mr. Tom Ellis, the chief Whip of the Liberal party. I shall not soon forget the shock I received when walking through the City streets on Wednesday, the fifth of April, I saw on the contents bills of the evening papers and heard being shouted by the news runners, "Death of Mr. Tom Ellis." I had left him only a week or two before in the lobby of the House, eager, impulsive and hard-working as usual. Everyone knew he was not strong, but no one thought he was so near his end. And even now I find it difficult to imagine that the kindly, genial chief Whip of the Liberal party has passed away to a region where there are no divisions.

Readers of INDIA may not perhaps thoroughly understand all that Mr. Ellis was, and in that case I am afraid I can scarcely enlighten them fully. I may say however that of the Welsh members he was far and away the most distinguished. He was a thoroughly honourable, honest and high-minded member of Parliament, and whatever prominence he had gained in the eye of the public he owed to his own unaided brain. It may be that my readers have not recently seen Mr. Ellis's name in connexion with Indian debates, but that is to be accounted for by the fact that when a man becomes a Whip, and especially a chief Whip, he is practically muzzled. He is not supposed to speak in the House, and as a matter of fact he has no time for oratory. Thus those who have followed recent debates on Indian affairs may not have seen Mr. Ellis's name as a speaker.

But as a matter of fact Mr. Ellis was, as all the Welsh party have been, enthusiastically in favour of Indian progress. It is only the dull, stodgy so-called Anglo-Saxon who takes the other side. He will talk in perorations about the brightest jewel in her Majesty's crown, but he will never stand up for one moment in favour of the proposals of the Indian National Congress. Indeed, but lately we have had a fine revelation of the English view of Indian affairs in certain letters published by a man named Steevens in the *Daily Mail*. This paper is one which puts before the public just what it imagines the public is likely to buy, and because of this Mr. Steevens's stuff, contemptible in every other sense, has a sort of interest and even importance.

And how does this globe-trotter, after about twenty minutes' experience of India, treat the subject? It is a big subject I know, but I am content to deal with but one aspect, that of education. Mr. Steevens is good enough to describe the Bengalee as a "bandy-legged, knobbly-boned creature who is not a man." Such a description might be passed over in silent contempt were it not for the fact that it gives us in England a keen sidelight upon the attitude of the Anglo-Indian towards the so-called "nigger." Mr. Steevens suggests that such a creature is not fit for education, and so do many other Anglo-Indians. They look down on those who are in theory our fellow-subjects. They never really consider the Native as our equal or our brother. Mr. Steevens has let the cat out of the bag in his coarse, vulgar and sneering descriptions about bandy-legs and all the rest of it.

Now I don't know at all whether the Hindus can be justly impeached or indicted as a nation for being bandy-legged. Nor do I care. In this respect I consider Mr. Steevens's attack inexpressibly vulgar. For instance, suppose I were to turn the tables on him, and while accepting his taunts about bandy-legs were to direct the discussion to baldness and hair restorers. Mr. Steevens's hair is not so luxuriant as it once was; and I have no doubt he would bitterly regret any public references to the hair getting rather thin on the top. I am not sure that he would be wrong either; but while he may dislike this personal style of attack when directed against himself he should refrain from indulging in any similar vulgarisms when writing about the Hindu. Mr. Steevens knows no more about India than a pig knows about Sunday—he should therefore say no more about it. If he does not like my references I can only remark that they are polite and mild when compared with the dull, insulting and impudent ignorance he has displayed in his references to a great and mysterious nation of which he has seen but the fringe.

I have been led away to talk of this matter beyond the length I meant to give it. I had no intention at the outset to waste space over a poor and ignorant slanderer, but rather to insist again and again on the merits and on the good work of so broad and generous-minded a man as Tom Ellis, and also of his countrymen, in connexion with Indian affairs. I know the House of Commons, having had to watch its proceedings night after night. Again and again in this column I have pointed out how the House empties when Indian questions are introduced; but I have noticed that the true and the steady friends of India in the House are to be found among the Welsh. So India, as well as England, may well mourn for "Tom" Ellis. He was a sound and steadfast friend of India; and though his official position made it practically impossible that he should speak in the House I know well enough, having heard it from him again and again, that he loved and pitied India and was prepared to do a good deal for her. And when Tom Ellis made a statement of that sort he meant it.

Mr. Maclean has been busy during the past week in asking questions of a more or less embarrassing nature. For instance, on Tuesday last he asked Mr. Balfour whether in view of the fact that the termini of the Indian and Russian Railway systems in Central Asia had now been brought within a very few hundred miles of each other, and that when the projected line from Orenburg to Samarcand had been constructed, it would be easy to complete through railway communication from Calais to Calcutta without even a break at the Caspian, her Majesty's Government proposed to open negotiations with Russia for the establishment of this overland route, which besides bringing London within ten days of Calcutta, would provide India with facilities of access to the immense new markets which Russian railway enterprise was opening in Asia.

Mr. Balfour was by no means ready to give a clear reply, and he passed it by with the simple remark that the Government was not in a position to make any announcement of policy on the subject.

So far so good, or so bad, but Mr. Maclean had other subjects about which to enquire, especially the Indian Sugar Act. The following little colloquy ensued:—Mr. Maclean asked the Secretary for India whether he had received the official papers relating to the Indian Sugar Duty Act; and whether the Government could now conveniently fix a day for the discussion of the subject in that House. Lord G. Hamilton: The papers in question have arrived, and I have directed them to be printed. With regard to the second part of the question, I must ask my hon. friend to put it to the First Lord of the Treasury. Sir H. Fowler: Can the noble lord say when they will be laid on the Table? Lord G. Hamilton: The right hon. gentleman knows that it does not depend on me; but I hope that they will be presented in the course of a few days. Mr. Maclean: Can my right hon. friend answer the second part of the question. Mr. Balfour: I am afraid that in the present state of public business it is impossible for me to give any pledge with regard to a day for the discussion of this question, though I admit that it is a very interesting one, and the discussion is one which the Government have no reason to fear. And so Mr. Balfour, recognising the great interest on the subject, cannot (or will not) give an opportunity of having it discussed. I may be wrong, but if I were a betting man I would wager that Mr. Chamberlain has put his comparatively innocent leader up to this trick.

CHRONICLE OF THE WEEK.

Thursday, April 6.—Sir H. Fowler, addressing a meeting of his constituents, referred to the death of Mr. T. E. Ellis as a very great loss, personal, political, and public, paid a warm tribute to his tact and his remarkable ability, and said he had not a single enemy, but numerous friends in all parts of the House. Sir Henry then proceeded to deal with the subject of Imperial taxation, enumerating its principal items, condemning as unfair the relief of agricultural rates effected at the cost of the general taxpayer, protesting against any suspension of the sinking fund for the redemption of the National Debt, and contending that the working classes pay more than their due share of the public burdens.

At a meeting of the British Empire League of Canada, held in Ottawa, the Minister of Marine announced that the Dominion Government were considering how best to assist in the naval defence of the Empire. They proposed to train 1,000 Canadian fishermen annually, when not engaged in their vocation, in sheds equipped like the deck of a ship. Subsequently the men would be drafted to warships for two seasons' drill of four months each. If Canada paid the men and furnished instructors, he thought the Imperial Government might reasonably be asked to supply the necessary armament.

The *Figaro* published the deposition of the examining magistrate, M. Bertulus, before the Criminal Chamber on December 9, describing his investigations in the case of Esterhazy, and some remarkable interviews with Colonel Henry.

Friday, April 7.—The New York correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* telegraphed that dissatisfaction with the American Government's Philippine policy was finding vigorous expression, and at a meeting in Boston resolutions had been adopted calling upon the President to suspend hostilities in order to confer with the Filipino leaders "for the purpose of giving the official promise of the United States to recognise their independence as soon as proper guarantees have been entered into for the preservation of order and the protection of property."

At a meeting of confectionery and jam makers in Glasgow, a resolution was passed emphatically protesting against the insidious attempts to secure the imposition of a countervailing duty on imported sugar.

Saturday, April 8.—The results of the Irish Local Government elections disclosed sweeping Nationalist victories. Even in Ulster, Home Rule candidates had been surprisingly successful. It was believed that altogether 423 Home Rule county councillors had been returned as against 102 Unionists. Divided into provinces, the figures were:—Ulster, 48 Home Rule, 64 Unionist; Connaught, 64 Home Rule, 3 Unionist; Munster, 126 Home Rule, 10 Unionist; and Leinster, 185 Home Rule, 25 Unionist. There were five counties (out of 32) in which the Nationalists would not have control of local affairs.

Mr. Leonard Courtney, M.P., speaking at Cawsand, referred to the coming Peace Conference and to the ever-increasing expenditure of the great nations on armaments. He commented on the practicableness and importance of the suggestion that the Powers should agree that no two nations should go to war without referring the cause of dispute to the other Powers and inviting their opinion upon it. What nations were quarrelling over to-day was a question of markets. If Free Trade could be adopted between the nations the cause of nine-tenths of the quarrels would be removed. The hope of obtaining Free Trade in America was not, he thought, so very distant, but in Europe Protection was ingrained. But the disputes of Europe did not now refer so much to home territories as to territories abroad. Though it might not be possible to establish Free Trade in Europe, they should not despair of getting Free Trade arrangements in the oversea possessions of the European countries. For instance, the dispute between England and France in West Africa found a settlement that removed the prime cause of quarrel by agreeing that within a very large territory belonging to each country the traders of both should enjoy equal rights of trade. In the case of the Nile settlement the same effect was observed. But if England undertook a missionary enterprise in this matter it was above all necessary that we should believe in our own cause. In our financial arrangements at home let us adhere to Free Trade. Protection and military expenditure ran together. The aggravated expenditure was an excuse for the imposition of protective duties. He hoped we should not have to fight the Free Trade battle over again, but our excessive expenditure made that possible.

Monday, April 10.—The House of Commons re-assembled after the Easter recess. On the motion for going into Committee of Supply on the Civil Service Estimates some discussion took place on the administration of the Foreign Office in Uganda, East Africa, and Zanzibar. The House went into Committee.

The returns for the elections of county councillors in Ireland were now practically complete. Only the figures from a few places in Galway and the Arran Islands had yet to be received. The latest figures showed an even more striking Nationalist victory than was disclosed in those given yesterday. In Ulster itself the Home Rulers had secured a majority of the councillors. The figures are: Ulster, 80 Unionists, 96 Nationalists; Munster, 9 Unionists, 137 Nationalists; Leinster, 22 Unionists, 222 Nationalists; and Connaught, 2 Unionists and 81 Nationalists. The totals were 113 Unionists and 536 Nationalists.

Sir Julian Pauncefote, British Ambassador at Washington, and Sir Henry Howard, Minister at the Hague, were appointed to represent the United Kingdom in the forthcoming Peace Conference. Vice-Admiral Sir John Fisher and Sir John Ardagh will assist the British Commissioners as naval and military experts.

At the sitting of the Diet at Gotha, a declaration by the Duke of Connaught was read, setting forth that in consequence of the premature death of the Hereditary Prince Alfred, and of the conditional renunciation by the Prince of Wales for himself and his successors of the right of succession in the Duchies of Coburg and Gotha, he (the Duke of Connaught) was the nearest agnate of the Ducal House who was entitled to succeed. As such, he and his House were prepared to fulfil their duties towards their ancestral Duchies.

The Paris *Figaro* published the depositions of Generals Zurlinden and Chanoine, ex-Ministers of War, before the Criminal Chamber in regard to the Dreyfus case.

Tuesday, April 11.—In the House of Commons a debate took place upon lawlessness in the Church of England.

The funeral of the late Mr. Thomas Ellis, M.P., took place at Cefnddwysarn Cemetery, near his home in Merionethshire. The body had been brought to Bala on the previous day, and it remained during the night in the Calvinistic Methodist Chapel. A memorial service was held in the chapel this morning, and so great was the assembly that an overflow meeting had to be held in another building. At these services tributes were paid to the character and work of Mr. Ellis by members of Parliament and others, including Mr. Acland, Sir John Brunner, Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. Herbert Lewis, Mr. Herbert Roberts, and Mr. J. E. Ellis. On the conclusion of the service

a procession, quite a mile long, left Bala for the cemetery, where the simple ceremony of interment took place. A memorial service was held at noon at St. Margaret's, Westminster, and was attended by many prominent members of Parliament, and others. The service was conducted by the Chaplain of the House of Commons, Canon Wilberforce, and the former Chaplain, Dean Farrar of Canterbury.

Sir Edward Fry and the Lord Chief Justice of England, addressing the London Chamber of Commerce made vigorous attacks on "secret commissions, rings, and corners" in trade.

Another sensation occurred in connexion with the Dreyfus case in the suicide of Adjutant Locrimier, ex-secretary of Colonel Henry. The deed was committed after he had received a telegram summoning him to Paris. The *Figaro's* revelations contained the depositions of General the Marquis de Galliffet, M. Casimir-Perier (ex-President of the Republic), M. Laroche (ex-Governor of Madagascar), M. d'Ocagne and M. Painlève (assistant masters at the Ecole Polytechnique), and M. Hadamard (cousin of Dreyfus). The statement of the ex-President was of a remarkable character, and contained full details of what is known as "the diplomatic incident," otherwise the visit paid to him by Count Münster, the German Ambassador, when M. Casimir-Perier was asked "personally to issue a formal *démenti* showing that the German Embassy was not implicated in the Dreyfus affair."

Wednesday, April 12.—In the House of Commons the Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Reinstatement Bill was rejected by 167 to 69.

At the sitting of the Liquor Laws Commission various amendments to the earlier portions of Lord Peel's draft report were proposed, but he refused to put them, on the ground that those parts of his report had been already discussed. Sir Algernon West then moved, on behalf of the neutral members, the substitution of their alternative scheme for Part V of the chairman's report. Without putting the motion Lord Peel declared the Commission dissolved, and withdrew. The other Commissioners subsequently agreed to adjourn to a fixed date in order that the situation might be more fully considered.

Some serious news arrived from Apia. During the last few days of March fighting was carried on briskly between Mataafa's men and a British-American force from the cruisers, supported by a small brigade of friendly natives; and an incident of the operations led to the exchange of angry letters between the German Consul and Admiral Kautz. On the 1st of April a British-American column was surprised by a large body of the enemy ambushed in a plantation belonging to a German. They fought stubbornly, but were at last obliged to retreat, with the loss of one British and two American officers and two British and two American seamen killed, and two British and five American seamen wounded. The loss of Mataafa's men was much heavier.—It was reported from Berlin that the German Government had categorically demanded, as a preliminary to the appointment of its Commissioner, more precise declarations than had hitherto been made as to how Great Britain would satisfy Germany's rights under the Samoa Treaty.

LORD CURZON'S SPEECH ON THE SUGAR DUTY BILL.

The following is a full report of Lord Curzon's speech in the Imperial Legislative Council, Calcutta (March 20), on the Sugar Duty Bill:—

Before I put the question that this Bill be passed into law, I should like to make a few observations with regard to it. I have been glad to notice the complete unanimity that has prevailed with regard to the Bill in this Council—representative as it is of so many diverse and important interests. The Hon. Mr. Mehta indeed would have preferred that this Bill should have been referred to a Select Committee—a contention to which I think that an adequate reply was given by Sir James Westland. I also understood him to urge that it might have been desirable that further enquiry should have taken place with respect to the subject-matter of this legislation. Well, I have always heard it made a reproach against the Indian Government that it is perpetually conducting enquiries, and very seldom acting upon them; and that reproach I, at any rate during my time of administration here, desire to escape. The answer to my hon. friend, Mr. Mehta, is that we have been conducting enquiries for a whole year past. We have received representations from every leading Chamber of Commerce in the country, and from most, if not all, the important firms connected with this industry. We have addressed observations to, and received replies from, the Governments of all the Provinces and districts of India concerned. We should have had, if my hon. colleague's advice had been followed, to wait for the best part of another year before we introduced this legislation. We regarded the case as urgent and we were not prepared to accept such a delay. At the same time I am glad to notice that the Hon. Mr. Mehta, although he delivered this criticism on a point of detail, did not withhold his assent, which I am certain that he is prepared to give, to the general principle of the measure. Then we have had on a previous occasion, and again to-day a statement approving the Bill from the Hon. Mr. Allan Arthur, the distinguished representative of European mercantile interests in this capital, and finally, we have had two speeches from the Hon. Mr. Chitnavis and the Hon. Mr. Ananda Charlu which I take it we are entitled to regard as typical of the opinions that are held by those important sections of the Native community which they represent at this table. I am therefore, I think, justified in saying that at any rate within these walls complete unanimity has prevailed with regard to the principle of the Bill. This complete unanimity here reflects an almost equally complete unanimity outside. There are, it is true, certain interests and certain Chambers of Commerce—Bombay and Karachi I may name—in which those interests are strongly represented, which have not entirely concurred in the necessity for countervailing duties at this stage. Those representations are entitled to due consideration, but it is to be noted that they do not come from the areas where the sugarcane is grown, where the refineries exist, or where the real effect of the bounty system is felt. They represent in the main the interests neither of the producers nor of the consumers, but of the importing merchants. On the other hand, if I regard either the representations to which I have already referred, and which have been received by us from the Local Governments, or the reception which our proposals have met with alike in the English and the Native Press of India, I do not hesitate to say that few measures have ever passed through this Council with a greater weight of qualified and homogeneous opinion behind them. Now the first point that I desire to emphasise is this—that it is in the interests of India, and of India alone, that this legislation has been proposed by us and that I have authorised the introduction of this Bill. It may be that our Bill may ultimately affect the action of other countries. It may more immediately touch the interests of certain of our own colonies as well. Sir James Westland in his speech to-day has alluded to the representations that we have received from the Colony of Mauritius, a colony in which, in view of the enormous Indian population that is there engaged in labour, we here are bound to take a close interest, and whose welfare we should be glad, I am certain, consistently with our own, to subserve. It may be that this Bill will set an example of far-reaching significance. By some it may even be regarded as a factor in the Imperial problem. It is from such points of view that we may expect the measure to be examined, and perhaps criticised, in the British Parliament in London. I do not deprecate such examination, or such criticism, conscious that it will not weaken, but will rather strengthen, our case. All I have to say here is that our conduct has not been determined by those considerations. We are exercising our own legislative competence, of our own initiative, though with the sanction and concurrence of the Secretary of State, to relieve India from an external competition, fortified by an arbitrary advantage, which can be shown to have already produced serious consequences upon our agriculture and manufactures, and which, if unarrested, is likely to produce a continuous and a dangerous decline. There is another point upon which I must, in passing, say a word. I have been glad to notice that no one in this Council has ventured upon the argument that we are guilty of an economic heresy in our proposal to meet bounties by a countervailing duty. Bounties are in themselves an arbitrary, and in my opinion a vicious, economic expedient designed in exclusively selfish interests. They are inconsistent with Free Trade, because they extinguish freedom, and they reverse the natural currents of trade. To meet them by a countervailing duty is to redress the balance and to restore the conditions under which trade resumes its freedom. I do not think that we need pay much attention, therefore, to the mutterings of the high priests at Free Trade shrines. Their oracles do not stand precisely at their original premium. This is not a question of economic orthodoxy or heterodoxy; it is a question of re-establishing a fiscal balance which has been deflected for their own advantage and to our injury by certain of our foreign competitors. Moreover, if the utilitarian basis upon which the doctrines of Free Trade are supposed in the last instance to rest, namely, that they regard the interests of the greater number, be examined, out of their own mouths would the prophets of those doctrines, in India at any rate, be condemned. For here we are dealing, in the case of the sugar industry, with a population the vast majority of which are not consumers of a cheap imported article, but are themselves producers of the raw material, and in their capacity as consumers, consume for the most part the article which they have themselves produced and worked up. In other words, the conditions that prevail in England are completely reversed. The majority in England consists of poor consumers to whom it is indispensable that the price of sugar should be low. The minority consists of capitalist producers. On the other hand, the majority in India consists of poor producers whose industry is at stake; the minority consists of well-to-do consumers of refined sugar who are not likely, in my judgment, to be affected seriously, if indeed they are all affected, by enhanced prices resulting from our legislation, but who, if they were, could not claim that their interests should override those of the overwhelming majority of the population. Now I shall not recapitulate the figures which have been laid before you with so much ability and clearness by Sir James Westland when he introduced the Bill a week ago; but let me remind you of the facts which have been established in this discussion. They are these: First, that there has in the last few years been an enormous increase in the importation of beet sugar into India from Germany and Austria—a fact which is unquestionably due to the loss by the American market of those countries in consequence of the imposition of countervailing duties by the Government of the United States in 1897; secondly, that in the same period the rupee price of sugar in this country has seriously fallen; thirdly, that there has been a contraction in nearly every part of India in the area under sugar cultivation, the total reduction being estimated at as much as 13 per cent.; fourthly, that there has been a widespread and a still unarrested closing of native refineries, a phenomenon which is capable of one explanation, and one alone; for while it may be argued that the decline in the total area under cultivation may be partially due to other causes, such as famine and the low prices resulting from famine, that this is not the case in respect of the factories which have been closed is demonstrated by the fact that in districts where cultivation has increased or remained stationary—in other words in districts which have remained

unaffected by famine—the refineries, nevertheless, have been and still are being shut. From these facts it appears to me to be impossible to draw any other conclusion than that this decline in an Indian industry—in which I have seen it stated that two millions of people are employed and in which the value of the annual crop has been estimated at nearly twenty millions sterling—is due to the importation of beet sugar at a price below the natural cost of production, *plus* the cost of transport, in other words to the unrestricted competition of a bounty-fed article. Now this is a state of affairs which neither the Government of India nor I, as the head of that Government, from whatever point of view we may regard it, can contentedly accept. If we look at it from the point of view of the agriculturist, we cannot sit still and look on while he is impoverished by the economic exigencies of Continental nations. If we regard it from the point of view of native manufacturers, what would be the meaning and value of the speeches which I have made since I came to India about the encouragement of native enterprise, if I were to acquiesce in the tacit suppression of this promising branch of indigenous industry? We ought, on the contrary, I think, to stimulate and to encourage its development by every means in our power. Finally, if I approach the question from the point of view of the Government, while we should be strangely constituted if we could contemplate with equanimity preventible growth of an agrarian and industrial grievance, which must sharply react upon the general prosperity of the people, we should also be poor stewards of our own estate if we were to acquiesce in a condition of affairs that must detrimentally affect both the land assessments and the canal returns, and in this way jeopardise the ultimate revenues of the State. These are the grounds—which I have endeavoured to state in their wider rather than in their narrower aspect—that have induced the Government of India to introduce this Bill, and that enable me confidently to recommend it to the acceptance of this Council and of the public.

INDIAN TRADERS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

The *British and South African Export Gazette* prints the following article in its current issue:—

The recent correspondence between Sir W. Wedderburn, M.P., and the Secretary of State for the Colonies, anent the position of British Indians in the Transvaal, and the statement of the latter that Sir Alfred Milner has been charged to take up the question and seek to arrive at some arrangement of a favourable character to the Indian trader, has wider issues than the mere local settlement. Should Sir Alfred Milner's negotiations result in exemption being made in all cases not governed by sanitary considerations, or even of the middle-class Indian trader alone, the anomaly will be accorded that better treatment is afforded to our fellow Indian subjects in a semi-foreign State which is denied in self-governing Colonies like Rhodesia and Natal. Such a result will be sufficiently remarkable from several points of view, and not the least that of the illustration which will be placed in the hands of Boers and Boer partisans in South Africa of partiality on the part of the Imperial Government in its dealings with the South African Republic. For our fellow Indian subjects, the case will also be equally instructive. They will understand that the vaunted British Empire of which they form a part, and which they have been and may be again called upon to defend with their blood and treasure, denies them civil privileges which are accorded them freely by such States as Portugal and the South African Republic. The effect of such a conviction widely disseminated, working as it will, against the solidarity of the Empire, has some pertinence even to the Colonies themselves. Its pertinence may be less felt than local Indian trade competition, or even be quite inappreciable by men whose politics are of the proverbial parish pump variety; but it has a real value and cannot be ignored by the Imperial authority, which is charged with the defence of the Empire as a whole. For good or ill, and possibly in the present state of European politics more for the former than the latter, the prosperity of India is inextricably mingled with that of the Empire: and while the Colonies themselves, and South Africa in an especial manner, are yet dependent for their independent existence on the existence of the Empire in all its strength and wealth, the recognition of this fact by them cannot be ignored. For several reasons also the Indian is entitled to other treatment than that which is justifiable in the case of native and other coloured races. He is civilised and a member of communities which were ancient when Europe was in its infancy. A wider horizon on the part of colonists generally of the factors ruling in the world would correct the provincialism which lies at the root of much of their recent action. "None live for themselves alone," and least of all our Colonies—at any rate not at present.

In defence of the extreme action which has been taken at Umtali (Eastern Rhodesia) recently, where a well-dressed mob took the law into their own hands and attempted to forcibly eject the persons and goods of British Indian traders, and of the extremely harsh anti-Indian legislation of which the Natal statute books bear evidence, has been urged the duty of preserving our Colonies as a "white man's land." This argument has a certain weight, though in the case of South Africa its force is weakened by the share in the country which is already enjoyed by the large native population there located. The inevitableness of this, under the circumstances, may be held to be its extenuation. A certain cogency may likewise be allowed to the contention that where a limitation can be put to the immigration of coloured races it should be put; and that were free access accorded to the teeming populations of India, the white man's heritage would be speedily overwhelmed by the added foreign increment to the aboriginal races. While both these arguments are allowed their due weight, that of the duties devolving from common membership of a great Empire cannot also be lost sight of. Given equal weight to these several conflicting ideas, the conclusion will be reached that a compromise is what is required by the exigencies of the situation. Were the several issues clearly defined, and also the case of the coolie labourer separated from that of the Indian trader, the immoral and unsanitary aspects sundered from the clean living, and fair from unfair competition discriminated, a creditable conclusion could not fail to be arrived at.

At the present time the case for the respectable Indian trader, not only in the Transvaal, but in Rhodesia and throughout South Africa, has not yet been fairly put. Occasionally, here and there, English and European firms have openly declared that they prefer the retention of the Indian trader, and they find his custom and his business practices superior to those of many whites, especially of the Russian variety. The consumer has also not been fully heard in this connexion. The noise of the opposition has drowned every dissentient sound. It is reasonable to suppose that were the opinion of the Europeans who are favourable to the continuance of the Indian trader focussed, it would be found of really respectable proportions, and commanding enough to challenge attention. Such an expression of opinion, whatever its dimensions, should be formulated, and its absence supports the assumption that the usual fair play accorded by Englishmen has been wanting and adds further strength to the view that this is eminently a case calling for compromise. From all known times, it should not be forgotten, the Indian has been in touch with Africa; in many parts of it he is the only possible link between that continent and civilisation; and his services to commerce and trade have been and are inestimable. It would, therefore, be an act of crying injustice if a *modus vivendi* were not devisable to allow him to take some share, however small, with his fellow British subjects in the working out of the destinies of those portions under exclusively British control. This measure of justice has been long accorded him in the Portuguese possessions, and the English Colonies cannot remain behindhand in so enlightened a path.

The views above expressed will doubtless commend themselves to Sir W. Wedderburn, with whom we had a brief chat on the subject in the House of Commons recently. This gentleman, as is well known, is using his influence in Parliament to obtain some measure of justice for the British Indian in Rhodesia, Natal, and the South African Republic; but whilst we are doubtful if any remedial method can be devised whereby in the case of the latter State the arbitration decision of 1893 can be upset (as was attempted in the Transvaal High Court a few months ago at the instance of the British Agent), which held that although under the London Convention Asiatics who were British subjects were protected by that instrument, nevertheless, they were amenable to the local laws of the Republic, it is clear that, so far as the Colonies above referred to are concerned, no such disability exists by which equal rights to trade should not be accorded to all her Majesty's subjects irrespective of creed or nationality. It is here that Sir W. Wedderburn can render the Indian trader a service, and we trust he will persevere in his efforts until Natal and Rhodesia are compelled to recognise that no great difference can be made between black and white, so long as they are the children of the common Empire.

THE INDIAN BUDGET.

FURTHER OPINIONS OF THE BRITISH PRESS.

The "Investors' Review."

The figures look quite gratifying, especially when placed alongside the deficit for 1897-8. As finally made up, the accounts for that year show a deficiency of fifty-six million three hundred thousand rupees, and behold the "revised estimate" for the year to close on the 31st inst. shows a surplus of forty million six hundred thousand rupees, after handing seven million rupees over to the provincial treasuries to help to replenish their depleted balances. Thus the deficit on the two years is reduced to fifteen million seven hundred thousand rupees. A most gratifying result on the surface, considering what India has passed through. It does not, however, all come from improved revenue, nearly eleven millions of the present year's estimated surplus is due to what is called "gain by exchange." That is to say the rupee has sold at a higher price in gold than was estimated a year back, and, therefore, it has cost the Indian Treasury less rupee money to meet their sterling commitments in London. Then four million three hundred thousand rupees have been saved on military expenditure, and the Indian railways have done so much better that the Budget is favourably affected by them to the tune of eight million five hundred thousand rupees. All these allowances made, the actual revenue is still better by thirteen million three hundred thousand rupees, almost every head, including opium, having shown an improvement. This was natural enough in the circumstances, seeing that the previous year has been so disastrous, and the improvement does not make good the previous losses, nor, as Sir James Westland is careful to warn us, does it give any guarantee that next year will also be an advancing one. Some of the favourable elements, he points out, are temporary only, and he draws from the rapid recovery the warning that a sudden reversal of the tide of prosperity, which the failure of a single month of seasonable rainfall has proved sufficient to effect, must never be left out of account. This is wise and prudent caution.

When we come to look at some of the pleas in extenuation of the rapid growth in expenditure characteristic of Indian finance, as of our own, which Sir James puts forth almost in the same breath with this warning, we are less disposed to commend. Contrasting the growth of military expenditure in England with that of India, he plumes himself upon the fact that while the defence expenditures, as he calls our extravagance in the United Kingdom, have risen 59 per cent. since 1883, the same sort of thing in India has increased only 44 per cent. This is a very poor argument. Even supposing we are not imperilling our future by our recklessness, it is no justification to the Indian administrator that he should imitate our example, and strain the finances of the country placed under his care by putting upon it burdens confessedly excessive, and proved to be so the moment any season of famine comes over the country. Probably it

is because the Indian Finance Minister is conscious of the weakness of his argument at this point that he once more drags in that terrible bugbear the "loss by exchange," and points out how flourishing India would have been had the rupee only remained at 2s. This is childish, but inevitable from the Anglo-Indian mind.

Does it never occur to these Simla gentlemen what would happen to the finances of India were they unable to persevere year after year with their policy of expending large amounts of capital raised in London on new "public works"? What, except this capital expenditure, has sustained the Indian Exchange in the current year? Sir James Westland is highly delighted that the Government has been able to lay down the unprecedented amount of nineteen million pounds this financial year at an average rate of "close on 1s. 4d. per rupee," being the largest amount on record. How has this been managed? We get no clue to the stability of the Exchange in the foreign trade of the Peninsula. Unaided that must have become utterly disorganised under such a tremendous pressure of Council drafts. The secret of the stability is not far to seek. During the year now about to expire ninety-one million six hundred thousand rupees has been spent out of capital in the construction of railways, with the result that 1,451 miles of new lines have been opened during the year, bringing the total mileage up to 22,650 miles. This magnificent expenditure is to continue in the current year, when it is estimated that another eighty-eight million two hundred thousand rupees will in this way be sunk, the money, of course, being raised in London under one guise or another. Doubtless, in future years, so long as money can be found, the same process will go on. The Simla Government estimates that 1,570 more miles will be finished this coming financial year, leaving 1,859 miles to be completed in 1900-1 or subsequent years. Long before this programme is finished we may be quite sure that others, perhaps still more ambitious, will be formulated, so that an indefinitely prolonged vista of capital expenditure lies before us. Here is the secret of the stability of the Indian exchange, not in the closing of the mints—a step which has wrought such disastrous results upon Indian industry and commerce. As long as the Simla Government is able to place against the enormous home charges credits in London to the amount of eight or ten million pounds per annum, a Finance Minister may consider himself extra prudent in estimating, as Sir James Westland does, that he can next year sell bills in London only at an average of 1s. 3⅞d. per rupee. By thus acting he or his successor is pretty sure, under existing conditions, to be able to show, when his "regular estimate" is next made up, that there has been a "gain in exchange" whereby the estimated surplus has been augmented, or the deficit reduced, as the rainfall and plague may determine.

It never occurs to any of these Indian gentlemen to try to find out how long England may be able to go on finding this money. We have a great number of dependencies all pulling at us for financial assistance, the credit of every one of which is absolutely dependent upon the power of the London market to meet their demands whenever made. What would happen were something to compel our market to refuse to assist any one of our numerous dependent borrowers? The question is worth pondering over. All goes well while credit continues to perform its functions here, smoothly and with ease, but every year which passes renders this smoothness more precarious. The multiplication of securities upon our market and the increase in the obligations of our dependencies cannot go on for ever—has already, in fact, reached a magnitude which should warn every expectant borrower to be cautious and curtail demands, and India not least. Should, within the next year or two, a real credit crisis break out in London, the finances of India would be about the first to fall into confusion. Deprived of the power to borrow freely and at will on our market for railway extensions, for military expeditions, for any purpose; thrown back upon the resources of her commerce, India would at once find herself in a position of weakness which could not fail to shake the position of the English Government there. It is easy to talk of estimating cautiously every future surplus by reason of the precariousness of the rainfall; but might it not be a stroke of prudence of even a higher order to curtail extensions of railways, and of dominions, so as to reduce the demands annually made upon the moneylender here, in case the day should arise when his power to lend would be exhausted? All the stability of Indian finance depends on the strength of the London money market to sustain the demands upon its resources made by India, Australasia, Canada, South Africa, the West Indian Islands, and other miscellaneous possessions of ours, one and all of which keep knocking at the door of the City usurer from time to time, begging him to lend them still a little more and a little more, money none of them had ever a thought of repaying. One day he is sure to be obliged to say, "I have no money; it is all sunk in your securities, which I cannot sell." Nobody has any money now to speak of, only paper, representing money often spent and lost, or the call of interest on money, which interest is now and then not forthcoming. What will Indian prosperity look like when its mist-enveloped rulers are themselves turned away with a cold *non possumus*? (March 24.)

His Excellency Lord Curzon, Viceroy and Governor-General of our great dominion in India, has been graciously pleased to condescend to express his august approval of the efforts of Sir James Westland to paint the front of the Indian Treasury in perfect alabaster picked out with gold. In doing this he was further condescending enough to inform us that "for my part I have every belief that the rupee will retain throughout the ensuing year the same position it has during the past. I even go further, and say that I shall be disappointed if we are not able to invest the 1s. 4d. rupee with greater durability than any which it has hitherto attained." Well done, most noble conjuror! It is beautiful to have strong hope. Passing to other topics, his lordship seemed as if even he might be a little disposed to tremble before the proposals to be submitted to him and his Council with a view to inaugurate "a momentous change in the financial system" of the Indian Empire. He may be called upon, he said, darkly hinting at mighty events, "to take steps that will affect the entire future of Indian trade and finance," and with this prospect before him he is anxious that the credit which India enjoys in the eyes of the world may be "enhanced by evidences of financial strength" such as "a large balance and expanding resources are the best testimony to." It is extremely easy, let us hasten to re-assure his lordship, to have this certificate of solvency so long as his Government is able abundantly to borrow. Study the Indian railway problem from this point of view, oh, most immaculate Viceroy, and it, exchange, and every other difficulty connected with the costly administration of an impoverished dependency will seem light and impalpable as the clouds of the Himalayas amid which you dwell. (March 31.)

The "New Age."

We are not to be deluded by the fine name of "surplus." We must look behind it to see what it really means. Now a surplus means simply that the Finance Minister has either wrongly estimated his income or his expenditure. It really gives no indication of the condition of the masses of the people, except that they have not broken down under the particular strain. A surplus may co-exist with a dangerously exhausted condition of the country, and a deficit may co-exist with a period of extraordinary abundance. To know what the one or the other really means, it is necessary to get down to the facts of the situation, as well as to ascertain the methods and the policy of the Minister. In the present case it is instructive to go back a few years and compare the present position with the state of things before the recent disturbances of war, famine, and pestilence. In 1894-95, the cost of exchange to the Calcutta Treasury was Rs. 14,600,000; in 1898-99 it was Rs. 9,350,000. These figures show a balance of Rs. 5,250,000 in favour of the treasury—a sum that overtops the present surplus, and will probably overtop the final amount. The surplus, then, has been engineered by the artificial elevation of the rupee. Again, in 1893-94, the Customs produced only Rs. 1,600,000; last year they produced Rs. 4,600,000—a difference of Rs. 3,000,000 resulting from duties added to the tariff in 1894, with the express object of meeting the deficits brought about by the drop in exchange. The flourishing Budget, therefore, is the consequence of artificial manipulation of the currency, together with the maintenance of a drain on the country no longer necessary for meeting a deficit obviated by a disingenuous financial expedient. (March 30.)

The "Yorkshire Daily Post."

From the point of view of the taxpayer and the Finance Minister irrigation works are more profitable than railways; whether the population as a whole benefit more by the addition of a large area to the cultivable land or by ease of transport is perhaps not a very practical question. This, however, must be borne in mind, that railways in India have a double effect. On the one hand, they provide markets for the cultivator in good seasons, and take him cheaply many articles which he needs; and when famine occurs they enable him to have food that otherwise could not be carried from districts where there may be plenty. On the other hand, they tend to equalise the price of food in all the districts through which they pass; so that when there is a famine in one part of India, in the food area drained by the railway prices rise and cause great suffering to the masses. Irrigation is wholly advantageous. Between the two the balance must fluctuate from time to time; and Lord Curzon may be trusted to give India all he can of the blessings of each. (March 29.)

The "Scotsman."

The social and economic condition of the country is not yet so stable as to assure its administrators that there is no chance of deficits in the immediate future as well as in the immediate past. India has passed through a year during which there have been no frontier wars of any consequence; a year, also, of good harvests and a high rate of exchange. There is no certainty of these favourable influences being perpetuated. The Indian crops and the prosperity of the Indian people and of the Indian Exchequer, depend on the vicissitudes of weather; and if there be anything in nature on which less dependence can be placed than the Indian climate, it is the mood of the Indian border tribes, or the behaviour of the Indian exchange. (March 29.)

"Western Daily Press."

Although it is a disappointment that the Government do not see their way to reduce taxation, it is reasonable to expect that they will be able to considerably reduce the liabilities of the country, and a year hence some reduction of taxation should be possible. . . . But though the Budget may cause some disappointment by its not containing recommendations for the immediate relief of taxation, at least it will perplex those persons who have assumed that the reimposition of the duty on beet sugar was a financial necessity. There is a great realised surplus, and another large estimated surplus without this duty. If it had been otherwise then it might have been possible to make out a fairly strong case for the duty, on the ground that the slight taxation it would involve would fall, not on the natives who use cane sugar exclusively, but on the Europeans who do not always contribute to the revenue all that justice demands. Economically the duty would have been unsound, but there might have been good or at least palliative reasons on the other side. But as the revenue is clearly not wanted by the Indian Treasury, one of the most effective weapons which Lord George Hamilton might have used in repelling what is likely to be a formidable attack is taken out of his hands. (March 20.)

The "Outlook."

The fixity of exchange which Sir J. Westland has been able to secure has removed one of the chief obstacles to an influx of British capital into India, and all that is now needed is a less distrustful and more cordial temper towards it on the part of the Indian Government. This temper Lord Curzon promises to display; but the point in his speech which will most pique the curiosity of the people of India was his announcement that he had drawn up a schedule of "twelve important questions all of them waiting to be taken up long ago, and to which he intended to devote himself;" but what these questions

are was just what he would not tell, nor did he divulge to his Council the reasons for his reticence. (April 1.)

THE "SHEFFIELD DAILY TELEGRAPH."

Sir James Westland believes in acting as Joseph did in Egypt when he fed the seven lean years with the product of the seven fat years. By saving up his surpluses, or at least a portion of them, he will have a reserve to draw upon in case of any sudden emergency, which will obviate any recourse to extra taxation. There is a great deal to be said for this plan. Constant ups and downs in taxation are a nuisance. It is quite as easy, and much less irritating, to go on paying a regular sum year in, year out. But there is a further reason why it is well for India to be in an exceptionally strong position financially just at present. The currency problem still awaits solution. (March 29.)

Imperial Parliament.

Monday, April 10.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

East India Famine,—Copy presented—of Appendices to the Report of the East India Famine Commission, 1898, being Minutes of Evidence, etc., Vol. I (Bengal), Vol. II (Madras Presidency), Vol. III (Bombay Presidency). Vol. IV (Central Provinces and Berar), Vol. V (North-Western Provinces and Oudh), Vol. VI (Punjab), Vol. VII (Miscellaneous) [by Command]: to lie upon the Table.

East India (Railways and Irrigation Works),—Return presented—relative thereto [ordered March 24; Mr. Price]; to lie upon the Table.

East India (Loans raised in England).—Copy presented—of Return of all Loans raised in England, chargeable on the Revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ending on March 31, 1899, etc. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 139.]

Tuesday, April 11.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

RAILWAYS IN CENTRAL ASIA.

Mr. MACLEAN asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that the termini of the Indian and Russian Railway systems in Central Asia had now been brought within a few hundred miles of each other, and that, when the projected line from Orenburg to Samarcand had been constructed, it would be easy to complete through railway communication from Calais to Calcutta without even a break at the Caspian, her Majesty's Government proposed to open negotiations with Russia for the establishment of this overland route, which, besides bringing London within ten days of Calcutta, would provide India with facilities of access to the immense new markets which Russian railway enterprise was opening in Asia.

Mr. BALFOUR: In answer I have to say to my hon. friend that the question he puts to me must be determined upon far wider grounds than those which he has mentioned, and I am not at present in a position to make any announcement of policy on the subject.

THE SUGAR DUTY ACT.
NO DAY FOR DISCUSSION.

Mr. MACLEAN asked the Secretary of State for India whether he had received the official papers relating to the Indian Sugar Duty Act:

And whether the Government could now conveniently fix a day for the discussion of the subject in this House.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The papers reached London by the last mail; they have been sent to be printed. As regards the second part of the question, I must refer the hon. member to the First Lord of the Treasury.

Sir H. FOWLER: When will we be able to obtain the papers?

Lord G. HAMILTON: I hope in the course of a few days.

Mr. MACLEAN repeated the second part of his question to the First Lord of the Treasury.

Mr. BALFOUR: I am afraid that it is impossible in the present state of public business for me to give any pledge with regard to a day for the discussion of the sugar bounties question, although it is, I admit, a question of much interest, and one the discussion of which the Government have no reason to fear. (Hear.)

Thursday, April 13.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE CASE OF MR. GLASS.

Sir SEYMOUR KING asked the Secretary of State for India, with reference to the resolution, No. 5047—P, dated Simla, November 15, 1897, by which the Government of India announced that the Secretary of State had sanctioned special concessions to officers employed on duties connected with famine relief or the plague, among which were included the following, to officers so employed for a period of not less than ten months, either two months extra privilege leave, or full pay instead of half-pay for the first four months of furlough or other leave as above, whether he was aware that Mr. I. G. H. Glass, C.I.E., was employed in famine work in Bengal from the commencement of the operations, was a member of the Plague Commission from its institution until he left the Service in March last, and that he applied for leave, to which the Bengal Government admitted him to be entitled as well as to the concession under the above rules, but was refused on the ground that he was required to complete his report on famine operations in Bengal, and to give evidence before the Famine Commission:

Whether he was aware that before this work was completed, he had come under the fifty-five years' rule, and was compulsorily retired, thus losing the benefit of either alternatives prescribed by the above rule:

Whether, although the Government of Bengal, in view of his valuable services, recommended that Mr. Glass should be given two months pay as compensation for the loss of the above privileges which was caused by the action of the Government in retaining him, he had nevertheless been refused any compensation both by the Government of India and the Secretary of State:

And, whether under the circumstances his claim to some compensation would be considered.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The facts are correctly stated in my hon. friend's question.

When the Government of India decided to grant certain concessions to those officers who had been employed in famine work, they expressly laid down that the concession should not take the form of a cash bonus, because it was leave and rest that the officers required after their arduous and trying duties, to fit them for further duty.

For this reason while highly appreciating the value of Mr. Glass's services they declined to make him a grant of money, after his retirement, in lieu of leave.

Mr. Glass protested against this decision in a memorial which was very fully considered by me in Council; but while fully concurring in the view expressed by all the Indian authorities as to the merits of Mr. Glass's services, I came to the conclusion that I should not in the circumstances be justified in over-ruling the decision of the Government of India.

EXCHANGE COMPENSATION ALLOWANCE.

Sir SEYMOUR KING asked the Secretary of State for India whether he would say how many claims for Exchange Compensation Allowance for Indian Civil Servants remained to be dealt with:

And whether a decision on those claims could be hastened.

Lord G. HAMILTON: I have no means of ascertaining the number of claims that remain to be dealt with, but it is, as I have already stated, a comparatively small one. Every effort will be made to accelerate a decision on the points still under consideration, which have been found to be extremely difficult of solution.

THE QUALIFICATIONS OF MR. F. W. FRANCIS.

Mr. D. A. THOMAS asked the Secretary of State for India if there was any truth in the report that it was intended to appoint Mr. Frederick William Francis, at present Director of Land Records and Agriculture, to be a Deputy Commissioner in the Hyderabad assigned districts:

Whether, in that position he would have extensive criminal, civil, and revenue powers as District Magistrate, District Judge, and Chief Administrative Officer:

What legal training and judicial experience for such office he had had:

And, whether it was proposed that Mr. F. W. Francis should supersede officers who had been regularly trained and were fully qualified for promotion and who, according to the official reports, had creditably performed their duties as Deputy Commissioners of districts over considerable periods, and during the famine of 1897, under exceptionally trying circumstances.

Lord G. HAMILTON: I have received no information on the subject. The appointment is one which it is within the power of the Government of India to make, without reference to the Secretary of State, and it is not the practice of the Secretary of State in such cases to interfere with the discretion of the Government of India.

I have no reason to suppose that the Government of India, in selecting an officer for this vacancy, will not have fully and impartially considered the claims of the several officers qualified for promotion, before coming to a decision.

PUBLIC MEETINGS ON INDIAN QUESTIONS.

THE WORK OF THE BRITISH COMMITTEE.

Speaking at Cambo, Northumberland, on April 4, a lecturer on behalf of the British Committee dealt largely with the land question in India. The lecturer criticised the Indian Budget Statement and showed what might have been done to reduce taxation.

At a large meeting at Maryport, on April 5, Sir Wilfrid Lawson referred to the Indian Sugar Duty Act. A lecturer on behalf of the British Committee dealt with the same topic.

The following names appear in the list for the Easter Pass Examination of the Council of Legal Education:—

Pass Certificates: Syed M. Amir, Shanker L. Batra, Padam P. Ginwala, and Munshi K. Prasada, Lincoln's Inn; Kalikrishna W. Bonnerjee, Rustomjee N. Burjorjee, Chaman L. Dhingra, and Naoroz H. N. Mody, Middle Temple; Jotindra N. Bonnerjee, Surendra N. Haldar, Inooganty S. Naidu, Shankar Nath, Mehar C. Pebra, Bhagat R. Puri, Sardarsinhji, R. Rana, and Narain D. Sethi, Gray's Inn.

The following passed in Roman Law and Constitutional Law and Legal History: Virchand R. Gandhi, Badruddin Qureshi and Jotindra Nath Roy, Gray's Inn.

The following passed in Constitutional Law and Legal History: Vallabhadas S. Doshi, Manilal J. Mody, Karm Narain, and Yeshwant R. R. Pandhre, Lincoln's Inn; Satish C. Gupta and Mumtaz Husein, Gray's Inn.

The following passed in Roman Law only: Ramam K. Doss and Sukumar C. Roy, Lincoln's Inn; Pestamji Dadabhai, and Nai Siri, Inner Temple; Mohamed Arabi, Kazim A. Khan, and Sadiq A. Khan, Middle Temple; Hukam Chand, and Devendra K. Mullick, Gray's Inn.

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